

How to Use an NRCS Career Planner

For Employees



1 Access the appropriate career planner

Step 1: Download the career planner and save it to your desktop.

Step 2: Add your name and the date to the career planner file.

Step 3: Open the career planner using the Excel desktop application.

Step 4: Click the **Enable Content** button in the yellow bar with the message "Macros have been disabled."

If it's yellow, it's for you!

Within a career planner, a yellow box always indicates a field where you can type in text or select an option from a drop-down menu.



2 Populate the career planner with your identifying information

Step 1: Click the **Home** button under *Navigation*.

Step 2: Input your name, working title, date, grade, and duty station into the appropriate yellow boxes.

- Note:** A GS level must be selected to review your competency assessment results and training plan.

Name:		Date:		Duty Station:	
Working Title:		Grade:	Please select your GS level		

3 Review key definitions and target ratings

Step 1: Click the **Key Definitions & Target Ratings** button under *Navigation*.

Step 2: Click the **Competency & Proficiency Definitions** button to review the definitions of each competency and proficiency level.

Step 3: Click the **Target Proficiency Ratings** button to review the target proficiency levels associated with each competency and task at each GS level.

Step 4: Click the **Key Terms & Definitions** button to review the definitions for key terms found in the career planner.

4 Input your current proficiency ratings

Step 1: Click the **Competency Assessment** button under *Navigation*.

Step 2: Use the **Competency** filter to select a competency and review the associated tasks.

Competency

Compliance

Conservation Planning

Farm Bill Program...

Foundational

Leadership & Management

Outreach

Project/Program Management

Technical Expertise

Level

National

Abbreviated Proficiency Level Definitions

- 0 - No Proficiency: not applied; require detailed instructions and complete oversight
- 1 - Awareness: applied in simplest situations; require close and extensive guidance
- 2 - Basic: applied in routine, structured situations; require regular, specific guidance
- 3 - Fully Proficient: applied in non-routine situations; require minimal guidance
- 4 - Advanced: applied in complex, unstructured situations; serve as a resource
- 5 - Master: applied in highly complex, ambiguous situations; serve as an advisor

Clear Ratings
THIS CANNOT BE UNDONE

Step 3: Determine your current proficiency for the chosen tasks and indicate it using the drop-down menu under **Self-Assessed Proficiency Rating**.

- Note: You do not need to provide a rating for all the tasks under each competency for the career planner to function properly.

Competency	Group	Subgroup	Task	Level	Please select your GS level			
					Self-Assessed Proficiency Rating	Supervisor/Trainer Assessed Proficiency Rating	Target Proficiency Rating	Modified Target Proficiency Rating (Employee)
Conservation Planning	Collection & Analysis	Identify Problems	Observe and document the resource concerns	National				

5 Email the career planner to your supervisor

Step 1: Save the changes you made to the career planner.

Step 2: Send the career planner to your supervisor as an email attachment. In your email, ask them to email the document back to you when they are finished inputting their proficiency ratings for you.

- Note: It is recommended that you have your supervisor input their ratings for the competencies and/or tasks you rated yourself on before continuing with the remaining steps.

6 After receiving the career planner from your supervisor, identify tool(s) and/or resource(s) for competencies and/or tasks with gaps

Step 1: Click the **Tools & Resources** button under *Navigation*.

Step 2: Select *Gap* from the **Gap/Surplus** filter.

Competency			Gap/Surplus	Task
Compliance	Conservation Planning	Farm Bill Program Management	Gap	Accept and assume responsibility for one's own actions, words, products, and decisions and/or those of..
Foundational	Leadership & Management	Outreach	N/A	Adapt behaviors or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected..
Project/Program Management	Technical Expertise			Adapt conservation practices to address the unique circumstances and concerns of socially...
				Address non-compliance issues

Step 3: Use the **Competency** and **Task** filters to select the competency and/or task you would like to view tools and resources for.

Competency			Gap/Surplus	Task
Compliance	Conservation Planning	Farm Bill Program Management	Gap	Accept and assume responsibility for one's own actions, words, products, and decisions and/or those of..
Foundational	Leadership & Management	Outreach	N/A	Adapt behaviors or work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, or unexpected..
Project/Program Management	Technical Expertise			Adapt conservation practices to address the unique circumstances and concerns of socially...
				Address non-compliance issues

Step 4: Mark the tool(s) or resource(s) associated with competencies or tasks that show *Gap* under **Gap/Surplus** as complete, via a checkmark, or to be used, via 'to do', using the drop-down menu under **Complete?**.

Competency	Group	Subgroup	Task	Level	Tool/Resource	Complete?	Gap/Surplus	Type of Goal?
Foundational	Representing the Agency		Represent USDA/NRCS and agency interests when dealing with others; interact with internal and external parties in a professional manner	National	Acting with Diplomacy and Tact		Gap	

7 Review your competency assessment results

Step 1: Click the **Results & Training Plan** button under *Navigation*.

- Note: A GS level must be selected to receive your results. To select a GS level, click the **Home** button under *Navigation*.

Step 2: Review your competency assessment results, filtering by competency using the **Competency** filter.

Type of Goal

Gap not Current Goal
 Long Term Goal
 Mid Term Goal

Competency

Compliance
 Foundational
 Project/Program Management
 Conservation Planning
 Leadership & Management
 Technical Expertise
 Farm Bill Program Management
 Outreach

View Report

Gap/Surplus Legend:
 Surplus
 Target Met
 Gap

Clear Type of Goal
 "THIS CANNOT BE
 UNDONE"

8 Determine your goals

Step 1: Identify the type of goal for each competency gap using the drop-down menu under **Type of Goal**.

- Mark the type of goal as “short”, “mid”, or “long term” using the drop-down menu in the yellow cells.
- Note: Make sure to select a type of goal for all gaps.

Type of Goal	GS - 15					Task	Competency	Level
	Gap/Surplus Size	Self-Assessed Proficiency Rating	Supervisor/Trainer Assessed Proficiency Rating	Average of the Assessed Proficiency Ratings	Target Proficiency Rating			
					5	Explain the agency's vision, mission, functions, and organizational structure; explain how the agency's social, political, and technological systems work and operates effectively within them	Foundational	National

9 View, print, and save your training plan

Step 1: Click the **View Report** button to view your training plan.

- Use the scroll bar to review your completed report.

Step 2: Select the **Export Report to PDF** button to open the training plan in a PDF format.

Step 3: Save the PDF report to your computer, adding your name and the date to the file name.

